

IN THE CLAIMS

Claim 1. (currently amended): Method of thawing pieces of ice which contain protein-containing products and water a frozen, water-containing product, which comprises introducing the frozen product pieces of ice into a horizontal mixer, heating the mixer and at the same time mixing the contents of the mixer intensively to maintain the temperature of the contents of the mixer at a temperature which is less than 10°C above the melting point of the ice, whereby the frozen product is pieces of ice are melted to form a liquid phase and during such melting, any floating frozen product is pieces of ice are continually submerged in the liquefied phase and mixed with it.

Claim 2. (currently amended): Method according to Claim 1, wherein said horizontal mixer is a disc mixer or ploughshare mixer or Beeker mixer.

Claim 3. (previously presented): Method according to Claim 1, wherein said horizontal mixer has mixing elements which have internal heating.

Claim 4. (previously presented): Method according to Claim 1, wherein said horizontal mixer has wiping elements traveling around the wall thereof.

Claim 5. (currently amended): Method according to Claim [8] 1, wherein said frozen product is a protein-containing products are protein-containing products from natural biological sources or from a biological process.

Claim 6. (Cancelled):

Claim 7. (previously presented): Method according to Claim 1, wherein the horizontal mixer is operated continuously.

Claim 8. (cancelled):

Claim 9. (currently amended): The Method according to Claim 1 6, wherein said temperature is maintained at less than 5°C above the melting point of the frozen product ice.